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ABSTRACT

This paper synthesizes available research regarding the residence patterns of refugees in the United States. Information is presented on both initial placement and secondary migration. The first section traces the evolution of U.S. policy and outcomes from 1945 to the start of the Indochinese resettlement program in 1975. The second section focuses on residence patterns of the 1975 Indochinese arrivals and the third section deals with refugees who have arrived since 1979. Official policies regarding placement, placement outcomes, and secondary migration patterns are outlined for both time periods, and the experiences of refugees are compared with those of other U.S. populations. The fourth and final section presents conclusions and recommendations for future refugee resettlement policy and practices. (CMG)

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RESIDENCY PATTERNS AND SECONDARY MIGRATION OF REFUGEES:

A State of The Information Paper

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April, 1984

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RESIDENCY PATTERNS AND SECONDARY MIGRATION OF REFUGEES:

A State of the Information Paper

This paper synthesizes available research regarding the residency patterns of refugees in the United States. These patterns have been, and are likely to continue to be, a subject of interest in setting U.S. refugee policy. Questions about these patterns have been asked at every recent Congressional hearing on refugee legislation and admission levels. The impact of policy changes on residency patterns, and residency patterns on policy effectiveness, is often raised in considering the merits of new proposals. Therefore, an accurate understanding of the geographic distribution of refugees, including reasons for specific patterns, and the implications of this information for policy formulation is essential.

Where refugees live in the United States is determined by two major factors, each of which is influenced by several other factors. First, refugees are placed in U.S. communities upon their entry into this country. Unlike other new arrivals, refugees are sent to pre-selected locations. Although efforts are made to meet the geographic preferences of the refugees (e.g., to reunite with family and friends), at times their wishes are not fulfilled. Second, after initial placement, some refugees relocate, moving to new communities within the state of original settlement or to different parts of the country. This is referred to as secondary migration, the second factor influencing geographic distribution.

This paper presents information upon both of these phenomenon--placement and secondary migration. The first section

of the paper presents an historical background to this issue, tracing the evolution of U.S. policy and outcomes from 1945 to the start of the Indochinese resettlement program in 1975. The second part focusses upon the residency patterns of the 1975 Indochinese arrivals, and the third section deals with refugees who have arrived since 1979. These latter sections outline official policies regarding placement, initial placement outcomes and secondary migration patterns. They also compare the experiences of refugees with those of other populations. The fourth section presents conclusions and recommendations that are drawn from the information presented in the analytic sections.

Historical Background

The United States has followed two major models in moving refugees from overseas to their ultimate destination in the United States. In some resettlement programs--e.g., the Displaced Persons program and current resettlement system--refugees have gone directly from abroad to local communities, generally after sponsors have given assurances that the refugees will be received and given assistance. In other cases, refugees have been placed initially in camps within the United States (e.g., Hungarians in 1957 and Indochinese arrivals in 1975) or have placed themselves in a central location upon disembarkation (e.g., Cubans in Miami), and then were moved to their resettlement sites.

Since 1945, official and informal U.S. refugee placement policy, whether resettling refugees from overseas or U.S. camps, has aimed at dispersing refugees throughout the country. For example, the aim of

the organizations resettling Displaced Persons has been described as follows:

> The organizations directing resettlement were influenced by two considerations: they wished to spread the new comers as widely as possible through the whole country, and to draw as many of them as feasible into agriculture. [International Sociological Association, The Positive Contributions by Immigrants, 1955, p. 45]

According to the authors, the initial places of residence reflected these considerations, although, as with later groups, secondary migration quickly occurred: ". . . almost at once the newcomers began to move. [The displaced] persons drifted away from the northeast and the south toward the Pacific Coast and the north central states. They transferred their residences from rural to urban places, particularly to cities over 100,000 in population." The movement to the Pacific Coast and from rural to urban areas conformed to the general patterns of movement exhibited by Americans in the late 1940's and 1950's. The movement to the north central states showed a tendency to gravitate towards areas with members of the same ethnic groups. Many of the Displaced Persons were ethnic Germans who had been expelled from East European countries, Poles, Russians and other central and East Europeans; the north central states had high concentrations of each of these nationality groups at the time the refugees entered.

In 1957, when Hungarian refugees were admitted to the United States following the uprising in their country, they were placed initially in Camp Kilmer, located in New Jersey. From the camp, they were resettled in U.S. communities, following a processing procedure which included consideration of employment

opportunities throughout the nation and assurances of sponsorship by a voluntary agency. Although Hungarian refugees were dispersed widely, most of them settled in a few states. In 1959, about 80 percent of the refugees were living in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Connecticut. Their residency patterns conformed to those of previous Hungarian arrivals. According to the 1950 Census, 79.4 percent of U.S. residents born in Hungary lived in these same states. As Taft, Ford, North noted in their study,

Refugee Resettlement in the U.S.: Time for a New Focus, four of these states are adjacent, and three are in very close proximity to Camp Kilmer. And, they further state, "deciding to place the refugee resettlement camp in [New Jersey] . . . was either an extremely wise decision on the part of the U.S. army, or a stroke of luck." [p.62]

Although it is unclear whether Camp Kilmer was chosen deliberately because of the large Hungarian population in the vicinity, it is certain that considerable preparation was given to later placement choices. As noted above, placements were made following a processing procedure that elicited information about employment. More specifically, the U.S. Employment Service interviewed employable refugees about their previous occupation, education, language skills, training and preferred area of resettlement. This information was matched, by an IBM-designed and financed system, with a job and housing availability inventory which identified occupational demands and job offers. From the computer match came a "Suggested Disposition for Employment

and/or Housing" which was given to the sponsoring voluntary agencies to use in placing the refugees.

The deliberateness of the Hungarian refugee program stands in marked contrast to the next major resettlement effort, the Cuban refugee program. Unlike other refugees, most of the Cubans who came to the United States in the early 1960's were self-selected and made their own way to this country. The vast majority of them came directly to Miami, the closest city to Cuba. By 1962, over 150,000 Cubans had registered with the Cuban Refugee Center in Dade County, with most of these individuals planning to remain in that area.

Early in this refugee flow, attempts were made to implement the policy of refugee dispersal that had been followed for almost 20 years. Cubans were encouraged to relocate in other U.S. communities. Refugee families and individuals who were on cash assistance in Miami (a total of about 66 percent in 1962) were offered additional funds if they resettled, with the money disbursed after arrival in the new location, and they were given promises of jobs upon resettlement. The federal government also paid the costs of transportation and administrative and other expenses of resettlement, through grants to sponsoring voluntary agencies, and agreed to reimburse states for assistance provided to refugees if their job offers fell through or they lost employment. To qualify for the resettlement program, Cuban refugees had to register with the Cuban Refugee Center in Miami, a process that on occasion caused problems, particularly when refugees who were already living outside of Miami were required to return there in order to take part in the federal program. (This

provision was later changed.) Most resettlement decisions were voluntarily made, but a refugee who was on assistance and who refused a bona fide offer of resettlement could be terminated from the public assistance roles in Miami. This would be done after a review by a committee composed of officials from the public welfare office, the U.S. Employment unit, the Cuban Refugee Center and the sponsoring agency.

In 1961, more than 16,000 Cubans were resettled from Miami and another 35,000 were relocated during the first eleven months of 1962. These figures account for about one-third of the total number of Cubans who had registered in Miami. About 50 percent of the new arrivals were being sent to places outside of Florida. According to testimony given by the Commissioner of Social Security in 1962, refugees went to 1,067 communities in 49 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico. Seven states and Puerto Rico absorbed more than 1000 refugees.

An examination of the state of intended residence of Cuban refugees who adjusted their status to that of a permanent resident alien (following passage in 1966 of a bill permitting adjustment) gives a sense of the success of the resettlement program. About 60 percent of these refugees resided in Florida, with other states with substantial populations being New York (9%), New Jersey (9%), Puerto Rico (7%), California (4%) and Illinois (3%). As in the Hungarian program, the Cubans tended to be resettled in states with existing Cuban populations. In 1961, these same states accounted for 90 percent of the Cuban-born alien population registered with the Immigration and

Naturalization Service, with 52.7% living in Florida and 26.1% living in New York.

The 1975 Indochinese Resettlement Program

Dispersal of refugees was made an explicit aim of the Indochinese refugee resettlement program in 1975, when the United States admitted over 125,000 Indochinese refugees within a relatively short period of time. The Interagency Task Force on Indochinese Refugees described its placement policy as follows:

> The Interagency Task Force has promulgated two general guidelines in an effort to influence areas of resettlement: 1) to avoid resettlement in areas of high unemployment; and 2) to avoid high concentrations of refugees in any specific community.

Upon arrival in the United States, Indochinese refugees were sent to four reception centers, located at Camp Pendleton, CA., Fort Chaffee, AK., Fort Indiantown Gap, PA., and Eglin Air Force Base, FL. There, basic biographical data were collected and several agencies did various kinds of screenings. Voluntary agencies interviewed refugees and, using a variety of information--including statistics provided by the Department of Labor regarding labor market conditions and volunteered offers of assistance from individuals, churches and other organizations--matched them with sponsors throughout the country. Also, several states, including ones that had few immigrants within their borders, agreed to serve as resettlement agencies and provide sponsorships for refugees.

Placement Patterns

These procedures led to a significant dispersal of Indochinese refugees throughout the nation, particularly when compared with the distribution of past refugee and current immigrant

populations. Refugees were placed in every state within the union, with 32 states receiving over 1000 newcomers. Eleven states received more than 3500 refugees, and these states accounted for 57 percent of placements.

This percentage demonstrates that the 1975 distribution--in terms of concentrations--was almost identical to the geographic concentration of the general U.S. population; 54 percent of the general population is located in the ten most populous states in the country. It also shows significantly more dispersal than is true of the initial residency patterns of other new arrivals. As has been shown, the Hungarian and Cuban refugees were considerably more concentrated in a few locations, with 80 percent of the Hungarians living in 7 states two years after arrival and 92 percent of the Cubans living in six states several years after arrival. Data for non-refugee immigrant populations also show greater concentration than was true of the 1975 Indochinese; in 1974, 79 percent of immigrants intended to reside in the 10 states with the greatest number of new immigrants.

Although the geographic concentration of the 1975 Indochinese refugees was much closer to the U.S. population than that of other new arrivals, the states in which they were placed varied somewhat from the general pattern. A larger share of the Indochinese settled in California (22.5% refugees versus 10% of the general population) and a smaller share settled in New York (3% refugees versus 8% general population). With respect to state locations, the Indochinese pattern also differed from other immigrants in several significant cases. Indochinese certainly settled in large numbers in many of the major immigrant receiving states (e.g., California and Texas), but some

traditional immigrant states--e.g., New York, which averaged over 90,000 immigrant arrivals per year during the early 1970's--received far fewer Indochinese than would be expected from their popularity with other new arrivals. On the other hand, Indochinese were placed in a number of states with very few other aliens. One example is Oklahoma which received 3,689 Indochinese in 1975, even though fewer than 1000 immigrants intended to settle there in each of the previous 10 years.

Within the receiving states, refugees tended to settle in relatively few areas. This generally did not lead to major concentrations, though, in the first year of resettlement. North and Baker, after analyzing addresses, concluded that the refugees were spread among 813 separate zip code areas. Most (64.7%) went to places which had fewer than 500 refugees; 26.8 percent were placed in areas with medium concentrations (500-2,999 refugees); and only 8.5 percent settled in zip code areas with more than 3,000 refugees.

Several researchers have analyzed data regarding the placement of the 1975 Indochinese refugees. These researchers conclude that the placement patterns of the Indochinese were a function of two major factors--the refugees' own preferences and the availability of sponsorships. The first factor tended to concentrate the refugees in a few locations, most notably California, while the second tended to disperse them throughout the nation. North and Baker have analyzed the placement preferences of the 1975 Indochinese arrivals.

Their data indicate that 47.3 percent of the refugees were sent to the state of their choice, leaving a majority of the refugees being sent elsewhere. According to North and Baker, 45.5 percent of the

refugees preferred placement in California. Yet, only 24.5 percent of the refugees were actually living in California, as of December 1975. On the other hand, 5.5 percent chose Texas, and 7.8 percent were settled there.

Andrews and Stopp have analyzed the state-by-state placements to determine why refugees chose certain locations and why sponsorships were available in certain locations. They found, not surprisingly, that the refugees were attracted to urban areas, milder climates and areas about which they had prior information. In contrast to earlier refugee populations, the desire to join family members or other members of their particular nationality group was not a factor since there were few Indochinese in the country at the time of their arrival. Sponsorships tended to be available in metropolitan areas; places with large existing Asian populations and activist churches; near U.S. military installations, government offices and industries with prior experience in Vietnam; and in places that were relatively close to the four processing centers to which refugees were initially sent. Desbarats, in her study of forces of dispersal and concentration (1983), also identified metropolitan population size and Asian population as major variables through multiple regression analysis. She found climate to be less indicative of initial placements, although it is a strong predictor of cumulative refugee population, that is, the distribution that includes both initial placements and secondary migration.

Pisarowicz (1980) also finds a high correlation between initial placements and the presence of an Asian population base,

but notes variation among Asian groups. For example, refugees were likely to go to areas with large Filipino populations, but not to places with large Japanese populations. Pisarowicz suggests that the Indochinese may have actively avoided placement in Japanese-American areas because of traditional animosities.

Pisarowicz and Desbarats found negative correlations between placements and the mean income of a state. In other words, refugees were placed in states with lower income levels. Yet, according to Pisarowicz' data, there was a positive correlation between placements and the mean educational level of the receiving community. Refugees tended to be placed in states with better educated residents. Pisarowicz reasons that these individuals would be more likely to volunteer their time and resources and serve as sponsors.

Although on most variables all of the available research agree, regarding two issues, Pisarowicz' and Desbarats' data disagree. Desbarats found that voluntary agencies placed refugees in areas with above average employment opportunities. On the other hand, Pisarowicz found a tendency for refugees to be resettled in areas with high unemployment rates. Moreover, he did not find unemployment rates to be a significant variable in the multiple regression analysis, while Desbarats did. These particular variables need more examination, since the availability of employment is obviously an important factor in determining whether placement in a specific location is likely to lead to self-sufficiency.

Since California met most of the criteria found by all of the research to be significant, it is not surprising that it received the single largest number of new arrivals. But, despite its great pull, refugees did go to many other sites, most notably because of the wide geographic distribution of voluntary agency affiliates and congregations, which were able to provide sponsorships. To some extent the internal dynamics of these agencies contributed to the geographic dispersal of the refugee populations, since most agencies were under considerable encouragement from their affiliates to place refugees in their communities. Had the agencies clustered the refugees in only a few locations, their affiliates would have protested that course of action.

Secondary Migration: 1975-1980

In the years after initial placement, the residency patterns of the 1975 arrivals began to shift, primarily because of secondary migration. According to North and Baker, fully 45 percent of the 1975 arrivals lived in a different state in 1980 than they did upon placement. North and Baker found several significant trends:

- The movement of refugees tended to go in the direction of southern and western states, a pattern found in the movement of other U.S. populations. In 1975, 54.8 percent were living in the West and 52.5 percent in the South (each state was classified as counting towards both the North/South and East/West dichotomies). In 1980, 68.4 percent lived in the West and 67.2 percent lived in the South. All of the states that registered a net in-migration were in the West or South.

- As refugee roots became more established with the passage of time, movement declined. Between 1975 and 1978, 36.4 percent of the refugees moved, an average of 14.6 percent per year; between 1978 and 1979, 13.4 percent moved; and between 1979 and 1980, 9.7 percent relocated.

- Secondary migration led to an ingathering of refugees, who moved to places with higher concentrations of refugees. By 1980, 20 percent of the Indochinese were living in zip code areas with populations of more than 3,000 refugees (as compared to 8.5 percent on arrival); the proportion who lived in small refuge communities (i.e., less than 500 population) had fallen to 40.1 percent from 64.7 percent. The proportion of the refugee population living in California increased from 20 to almost 40 percent.

Similar shifts in the refugee population have been cited by other researchers. Gordon noted that in 1975, California had 22.5 percent of the refugee population, but by 1979, 31.2 percent were living there. ORR data show that the following states had positive net migration between 1978 and 1979: California, Colorado, Kansas, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. All but Rhode Island are Western states. (It should be noted that these data include refugees who were admitted to the United States in 1976, 1977 and 1978, and they are therefore not completely comparable to North and Baker's data tracing 1975 arrivals.)

Several researchers have analyzed the secondary migration of refugees to and from specific locations, finding interesting variations on the national picture described by North and Baker and Gordon. For example, McInnis examined the migration patterns of a small sample of refugees who were resettled by one voluntary agency in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. She found that only 18 percent moved between May 1975 and October 1980. The highest levels of movement occured among refugees who were placed initially in communities with a total population of less than 11,000. Fully half of those refugees moved between 1975 and 1980.

While McInnis chose an area with relatively few refugees, Bach examined the residency patterns of refugees in Los Angeles, a major center of Indochinese life in the United States. Focusing on the years 1978 and 1979, he found lower levels of secondary migration than expected. He identified four categories of refugees: stayers, those living at the same address in 1978 and 1979; movers, those changing residence during 1978 but only to another area of the city; migrants, persons with January, 1978 addresses outside of Los Angeles; and new entries, 1979 registrants without a reported 1978 address but with a 1978 date of entry. Most (59.7%) of the sampled refugees came in 1975; almost all of the rest entered between 1975 and 1978, with a few having immigrated prior to 1975. About one-half of the sample were stayers, another 11 percent were movers (i.e., those changing residence but not city), and 23 percent were new arrivals. Secondary migrants accounted for only 15 percent of the sample, with 6 percent coming from elsewhere in California and 9 percent migrating from outside the state. These findings, incidentally, do not contradict North and Baker's findings, since they found that most of the movement they detected had occurred prior to January 1978, with movement thereafter being of a smaller dimension.

The amount of secondary migration across state lines that was documented by North and Baker shows a much higher degree of movement than is true of the general U.S. population. The March 1978 Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Census Bureau examined general geographical mobility between 1975 and 1978, the same period of time covered by North and Baker's work. During this period, 34 percent of white respondents changed their residence, with 19.7 percent moving within the same county, 7.8 percent to a different county in the same

state and 6.6 percent to a different state. Black respondents showed even lower levels of interstate migration, with only 4.5 percent moving to another state.

The greater propensity to move among the Indochinese refugees can be explained by several factors. First, unlike other U.S. residents, the refugees had no particular ties to the places in which they were settled. The "pull" of home, family, jobs or even familiarity with a specific location did not serve as a counter pressure to the desire to relocate. Second, refugees have already made one significant set of moves--from country of origin to place of first asylum to country of resettlement. Research indicates that those who have moved once are more prone to move again (See, for example, DaVanzo and Morrison). Third, research indicates that new job-seekers and those who are unemployed are more migration-prone than satisfied job holders. Refugees obviously fall into the former category during their initial period of time in this country; even after obtaining employment, many of the 1975 Indochinese were dissatisfied job holders since they tended to obtain work in lower-paying jobs and/or occupations that were below their level of employment in Indochina.

Although the dimensions are greater, the patterns of secondary migration outlined by North and Baker, and substantiated by other research, demonstrate that refugee patterns in 1975 and later years, agreed in fundamental ways with the interstate migration patterns of other U.S. residents. The CPS found that "internal migration is continuing to shift population out of the northern states into the

South and West." Between 1975 and 1978, the Northeast experienced a net out-migration of 699,000 persons 3 year of age and older; the north central region had a net outmigration of 687,000 persons 3 years of age and older. The south's net in-migration was 1,009,000 persons and the west net in-migration was 376,000 persons.

Several researchers have analyzed the characteristics of refugee secondary migrants and/or the factors that encourage and retard this movement. In his study of the social, economic and psychological adaptation of Vietnamese refugees, Dunning looked at subgroups of refugees to identify possible differences in mobility. Collecting data in 1980, he found that people of Sino-Vietamese origin were slightly more stable than those of Vietnamese origin; age made little difference, except for those over 50 years of age, who were less mobile than younger refugees; women were more stable than men; and people in the labor force were slightly more mobile than those who had never been in the labor force. (He could find no direct cause and effect relationship between geographic mobility and labor force participation, however.) Among the principal reasons given for choosing past and current residences were employment opportunities, climate and presence of family members. Refugees were also asked about their future plans. Those who were interviewed in Los Angeles and Orange Counties and the Houston and Galveston areas were more likely to indicate that they intended to stay where they were (83 percent in California and 70 percent in Texas) than were those interviewed in New Orleans, where 11 percent said they planned to

move in 1 year or less and 23 percent planned to move in 1-2 years. The destinations they cited were California, Texas and, in a surprising result, the District of Columbia.*

The North/Baker and Desbarats studies include more indepth analysis of factors related to secondary migration. North and Baker focus on the characteristics and experiences of the secondary migrants and Desbarats examines the states to and from which refugees move. North and Baker perform two sets of analytic procedures in analyzing the differences between movers and stayers. In a cross-tab analysis, they come to the conclusion that the background characteristics of refugees prior to flight had little impact on later migration patterns, but that the resettlement experience is significant. Both the amount of time spent in a reception camp and success in finding a sponsor affected migration. So too did whether a refugee had been settled in the state of his or her choice. About one-third of those resettled in the state of choice moved by 1978, whereas 43 percent of those settled away from their state of choice had moved.

The second analysis, using multiple regression, backed up these findings. First, North and Baker found that several variables were interrelated and reflected a positive resettlement experience: short length of time in camp; being resettled in the state of one's choice; having a sponsor; having friends in the

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*Although Northern Virginia is a major area of Indochinese Resettlement, the District of Columbia is not noted for a large Southeast Asian population it is possible that the New Orleans refugees meant the greater metropolitian D.C. area.

United States; being resettled in an area with a large concentration of Indochinese and being resettled in California. These factors were combined into a scale measuring the ease or difficulty of a refugee's resettlement experience. High rating on this index (i.e., having a negative experience) increased the probability that a refugee would migrate between 1975 and 1978. By 1979, however, this index no longer had a significant effect. Presumably, the influence of the events that occur immediately upon resettlement begin to blur, disappearing altogether four to five years after arrival. Several other factors emerge from the regression analysis as predictors of movement. Although resettlement by most agencies has no discernible effect, sponsorship by Church World Service (CWS) and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) does reduce the likelihood of secondary migration, at least during the first three years. This factor also disappears with time. On the other hand, age becomes more of a factor in 1979 and 1980 than it is in 1978. Older refugees are less likely to move. Finally, a report of employment decreases the probability that a refugee will move, as does residence in California or Texas.

These data show that refugee migrants conform to other migrants in one important way and differ in another. The 1978 CPS data found that the highest mobility rates are found for persons in their twenties, and the lowest rates are found for persons over the age of 55. In this respect, refugees follow the U.S. pattern. The CPS also found, however, a relationship between interstate migration and education. "Movers with some college are more likely to move long distances than movers with

fewer years of school completed." Yet, North and Baker found no correlation between refugee background (including education) and propensity to move. The reasons given by CPS in explaining the relationship between these two variables may shed light on this difference between the Indochinese and general U.S. pattern. CPS posited that:

> education contributes to mobility by reducing the costs of moving--both psychic and economic. Because college-educated persons usually have higher salaries, they can more easily afford moving costs. . . . Also the better educated individual is more likely to have information about alternative destinations in terms of labor markets, social and recreational amenities, and housing availability. This greater degree of information about other areas makes it easier for the more educated person to consider moving as an alternative to staying in the present area.

For the new refugee arrival, it is unlikely that level of education will in fact make much difference in cushioning costs or better preparing the potential migrant. Given the language barrier and tendency for even very well educated newcomers to take entry level jobs, previous education will not "reduce the costs of moving."

Desbarats, in her analysis, examines the push and pull factors associated with the refugees' place of residence. She analyzed the characteristics of states with positive net migration and negative net migration to determine if there are discernible differences. She found two interesting findings. First, a much higher level of explanation was obtained for out-migration than for in-migration. In other words, she found push factors were more significant than were pull factors. With regard to the push factors, welfare eligibility requirements had the most effect on migration. Refugees tended to leave states where welfare eligibility requirements are

strict and benefits are low. Among the pull factors, she found a positive association between a state's income per capita and net migration, with in-migration occuring in states with high levels of income. Other pull factors, that is, those in addition to economic prosperity, appeared to be the presence of an Asian ethnic community and high welfare benefits. Interestingly, although climate is a good predictor of where refugees reside, it does not seem to influence whether a state has net in- or out-migration.

Data on the effects of secondary migration on the economic status of refugees are inconclusive, but some of the available evidence is interesting. North and Baker found that earnings for those who stay where they are resettled tend to be higher than for those who move. Nevertheless, they find secondary migration to be a positive phenomenon because migrants' earnings increased more between 1978 and 1979 then did the earnings of stayers, "indicating that migrants on average improved their economic lot by migrating." The OSI Tenth and Eleventh Wave Surveys also suggest that migrants are doing well, but these data indicate that they are surpassing non-migrants, not just their previous experience. In these surveys migrants to both Texas and California were more likely to be in the labor force and employed than were non-migrants, indicating greater involvement in the work place. (It should be noted that these surveys look not only at 1975 arrivals but later cohorts as well.) Further research, specifically aimed at this issue, seems warranted in light of these findings.

To summarize, because of a conscious effort to disperse the 1975 arrivals throughout the nation, their pattern of settlement was much closer to that of the general U.S. population than to

previous refugee groups or other immigrants. In 1975, placement decisions were made on the basis of a number of factors, including the preferences of the refugees (generally for urban areas, places with an existing Asian population and a warm climate) and the availability of sponsorships (generally in metropolitan areas, near military or government installations and favorable employment prospects). About half of the refugees were placed where they requested, while the rest were sent to other locations, setting up some of the pressures for secondary migration.

Refugee Residency Patterns: 1979 to the Present

Between the end of 1975 and 1978, Indochinese refugees continued to come to the United States but in relatively small numbers. Then, towards the end of 1979, the United States announced that it would admit 14,000 Indochinese refugees per month in order to reduce pressures on first asylum countries in Southeast Asia. With the arrival of these large numbers, in conjunction with the Mariel boatlift that brought 125,000 Cubans to the United States, placement policy and procedures again came under review.

Although the goal of placement policy remained dispersal of refugees, other factors now had to be taken into account. By 1979, the context of Indochinese refugee placements had changed, since decisions regarding the placement of new arrivals were greatly influenced by the existing pattern of settlement. Secondary migration had led to a concentration of the Indochinese in a few key locations. As noted above, over 30 percent of the Indochinese were living in California as of 1979. About 68

percent were clustered in the 10 states with the largest number of refugees. Many of the new arrivals were hoping to reunite with family members who had already come to this country, and therefore planned to settle in these same locations. In addition, some of the counties in which refugees were living believed they were experiencing adverse impacts as a result of resettlement and indicated a reluctance to accept more newcomers.

Since 1979, placement policy has tried to reconcile the two pressures described above--to facilitate family reunification and to reduce the placement of refugees in areas fearing adverse impacts. Obviously, the two efforts were contradictory since family reunification often meant the placement of new refugees in areas with existing concentrations.

Current Placement Policy

In 1982, formal placement policy was promulgated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, following legislative encouragement and a review of the issues by a working group composed of federal, state, and private agency officials. In the form of a letter of agreement between the sponsoring agencies, the Department of State and the Department of Health and Human Services, the placement policy outlined the following principles:

- That the distribution and placement of refugees be done in a manner which will reduce further impact on certain communities and to avoid creating new areas of high impact in the future.
- That the role of private, non-profit organizations in the resettlement process be maintained and strengthened.
- That refugees should be placed in communities which have conditions favorable to their attainment of self-sufficiency.
- That coordination between public and private agencies

in the resettlement process be encouraged and increased.

- That the placement of refugees be done with an awareness of the consideration for the cultural integrity of the population being resettled and the integrity of the family unit.

- That the voluntary agencies shall provide core services to refugees during their initial three months in the United States under the terms of the cooperative agreement governing the reception and placement grants awarded by the Department of State.

The key to the placement policy was described by a former Director of the Bureau of Refugee Programs:

> The purpose of this policy is to reduce the placement of refugees in areas of high concentration so as to achieve a a more equitable distribution of refugees throughout the country.

Impact was defined as:

> The existence of circumstances under which, based upon available data and the judgments of those most actively participating in the resettlement effort, continued arrivals of refugees into an area would result in a drain on community resources of sufficient magnitude to materially affect the quality of services to the general community, and would be detrimental to the refugees' prospects for the timely achievement of self-sufficiency.

A number of counties were identified as meeting this definition, including several into which the voluntary agencies had already reduced placements. Under the terms of the letter of agreement, the agencies agreed that they would not place "free" cases--i.e., those without relatives in the United States--into the designated areas. In addition, they agreed that refugees with less-close relatives would be placed with relatives in impact areas, in accordance with the relevant points in the placement policy, on a case-by-case basis, to minimize both adverse impact and secondary migration.

At the same time that the placement policy was developed and implemented, the federal government also put into place two demon-

stration projects aimed at testing new resettlement models. The first, the Khmer Guided Placement Project, created new clusters of refugees in areas with low concentrations of Khmer refugees, in order to reduce the number of Khmer initially settling in Long Beach, California and, by encouraging the development of strong communities in new sites, to lower the rate of secondary migration. The second demonstration, the Favorable Alternative Sites Project (FASP), prompted negotiations between the federal agencies, state and local officials and voluntary agencies to designate several cities with favorable employment prospects, as sites for planned resettlement efforts, including increases in social service funding.

Placement Patterns of Indochinese Refugees

Placement of the Indochinese refugee population that entered the United States since 1979 reflects the various factors described above. In 1980 and 1981, the proportion of the refugee population who were placed in California and Texas increased, as was expected given the concentrations of refugees already in those states and the policy of family reunification. In 1980 29.1 percent of the new arrivals went to California and 7.3 percent went to Texas; in 1981, 31.1 percent went to California and 9.0 percent to Texas.

The concentration of refugee placements differed somewhat by ethnic group within the Indochinese populations. Whereas most of the 1975 arrivals were Vietnamese, in the post 1979 period the Southeast Asian refugee population was more diverse. Khmer accounted for 8 percent of the 1980 arrivals and 19 percent of the 1981 newcomers. Laotians accounted for 34 percent of the 1980 arrivals and 24 percent of the 1982 ones. In 1980 and 1981, the Vietnamese accounted for 57

percent of arrivals. In 1980, the placement patterns of Vietnamese and Khmer refugees tended to be more concentrated than the placement patterns of the Laotians. Over 35 percent of the Vietnamese and Khmer were placed in California that year, whereas only 20 percent of the Laotians settled there and no other state received more than 7.5 percent. Whereas about 70 percent of the Vietnamese and Khmer were placed in the top ten states, only 62 percent of the Laotians were in 10 states.

After promulgation of the placement policy, the proportion of new arrivals going to California decreased, to 25 percent in 1982. Even before that time, changes took place in the distribution of the Khmer because of the demonstration project that was implemented in 1981. First, the proportion of Khmer going to California dropped from 35 percent in 1980 to 18.2 percent in 1981. Further, several states that had not previously received significant numbers of refugees increased their share of new placements. As Gordon stated,

> a comparison of [the] list [of Khmer Guided Placement sites] with the lists of major states of Cambodian resettlement in 1981 indicates that the Cluster Resettlement was an important factor in changing the pattern of Cambodian resettlement between 1980 and 1981. Four states [participating in the program] Illinois, Texas, New York and Virginia, had previously been important in Cambodian resettlement, and they received anincreased proportion of this group in 1981. Two other states, Georgia and Massachusetts, previously had a few hundred Cambodians in their total refugee populations and received enough in 1981 to place them in the list of the top ten states.

The FASP demonstration has also affected the placement patterns of new arrivals. In 1980, Arizona ranked 32nd and North Carolina ranked 27th in the number of new refugee arrivals. By 1983, after implementation of FASP, Arizona ranked 12th and North Carolina ranked 19th.

Placement Patterns of Other Refugees

During the past two years, the distribution of the refugee population upon arrival has been influenced by the growing diversity in the overall refugee population. Unlike several years ago, when resettlement was dominated by two or three groups (primarily Indochinese and Soviets), the current refugee flow is composed of refugees from more than twenty countries. In 1980 and 1981, about 90 percent of the refugees approved for admission to the United States came from Southeast Asia and the Soviet Union, whereas in the past two years only 60 percent came from these areas.

Data now distributed by ORR combine placements of Indochinese and other refugees, and these data indicate that about 70 percent of all incoming refugees are settling in the ten states with the largest refugee populations. Detailed information is not currently available on the placement patterns of other populations--although ORR is now preparing those tabulations--making comparisons difficult, but where information exists about non-Indochinese, there is evidence that their patterns are much closer to other immigrants than to Southeast Asians. For example, Soviet refugees (very few of whom are arriving now) consistently show greater concentration than the Southeast Asians, with 68 percent of those resettled in 1980 going to four states, New York, California, Illinois and Pennsylvania. The same can be said for refugees from Ethiopia (the principal concentrations being the District of Columbia and New York), Iraq (Michigan), Poland (Illinois, New York, and California) and other nations. As with other newcomers, the explanation for these

residential preferences lies in the presence of an existing ethnic community.

Secondary Migration Patterns

In comparison to work on the secondary migration patterns of the 1975 arrivals, considerably less research has been done on the secondary migration of recent refugees, although the issue remains an important one. There are several reasons for the lack of research, not the least being a paucity of data on the subject. Most of the research conducted on the earlier arrivals had used a data source that is no longer available--the INS Alien Address Cards, which every alien was required to send to the federal government. Beginning in 1982, aliens were no longer required to fill out the form. With the end of the registration system came an end to the primary source of information on the year-to-year movement of refugees.

In recent weeks, however, a new data source regarding secondary migration has become available, although it has not been fully completed or utilized at present. In the Refugee Assistance Amendments of 1982, the Congress directed the Office of Refugee Resettlement to compile and maintain data on secondary migration. On the basis of the legislation, ORR developed a new data collection instrument, called the Refugee State-of-Origin Report. All states were asked to provide the first three digits of the social security numbers of the refugees receiving assistance in their states. These numbers are assigned geographically in blocks by state. Since refugees tend to receive social security numbers immediately upon arrival in the United States, their numbers are good indicators of the states into which they were initially placed. From the information provided by the states on their assistance caseload, ORR has

been able to determine in- and out-migration for each state. For example, if California records a refugee with a social security number whose first three digits indicate that it was issued in Texas, it is assumed that the refugee left Texas (thereby counting as an out migrant) and moved to California (thereby counting as an in migrant).

Before looking at the data, three points must be made about them. First, the data only pertain to refugees who are time-eligible for ORR-funded services and assistance. For the most part, therefore, data collection is limited to refugees who have been in the country for three years or less. Since this is the population about which we know the least, in terms of secondary migration, this is not a major drawback at present. In the future, the data collection mechanism will be a problem, however, because it will be difficult to follow trends over time.

The second drawback is more immediate. By focussing on the recipients of ORR-funded programs, this data collection technique provides information about the portion of the refugee population that utilizes assistance but tells us nothing about the secondary migration patterns of more self-sufficient refugees. Whether this factor over- or under-estimates overall secondary migration is difficult to determine, since no other data source provides comprehensive information about the large number of time-eligible refugees who do not receive assistance. It is reasonable to assume, though, that these data may over-estimate movement into states with liberal cash assistance policies and high benefit levels and under-estimate movement into states with more

restrictive welfare policies and/or lower benefit levels but better than average employment prospects.

Third, information has been collected and will be disseminated on all refugees. Since almost all previous studies have concentrated on the secondary migration of the Indochinese, the data from this new source will not be strictly comparable to the data used before. It is generally assumed that fewer non-Indochinese relocate, and that a smaller proportion utilize assistance programs, but there is not sufficient data proving these assertions.

As of this writing, state of residence information has been collected from all but one state. The data pertain to a total of 151,621 refugees, nearly half of the refugees who have been in the United States for three years or less. Although the data are still incomplete some preliminary findings are suggestive:

- A total of 115,115 refugees, or 75 percent, receiving assistance were living in the state in which they were resettled initially.
- Of the 38,506 refugees (25%) who had moved to another state, nearly 24,000 (62%) had moved to California. Washington was the second favored destination, attracting 1,744 people, or 4.5 percent.
- Almost all states experienced both gains and losses due to secondary migration. Even states with as few as 25 refugees (e.g., Delaware) attracted several individuals from other states.
- Only five states gained net population through secondary migration, at least as far as their assistance caseload is concerned. These were: California (22,546), Massachusetts (578), Virginia (430), Rhode Island (254) and Wisconsin (70).
- Out-migrants counted in this survey represented 11.5 percent of all of the refugees who arrived from July 1980 to June 1983. In sixteen states, a much higher than average proportion of arrivals left the state and sought assistance in another state. Most of these states have more restrictive welfare eligibility criteria and/or lower benefits and/or no general assistance program. In six

states, a much lower than average proportion of arrivals left the state and sought assistance elsewhere. These states (California, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New Jersey) generally have liberal cash assistance policies and high benefit levels and/or they are states that have resettled large numbers of non-Indochinese refugees.

- o There was a substantial amount of population exchange between contiguous or geographically close states. This pattern is consistent with general migration patterns.

Finding extensive population movement into California was not unexpected. Several factors, in addition to those which we have already seen in the examination of the secondary migration of the 1975 Indochinese arrivals (i.e., presence of family members, draw of the ethnic community, climate, etc.) have contributed to that pattern. First is the unusual case of the migration of the Hmong refugees into the Central Valley of California. Beginning in late 1980, large numbers of Hmong from many other parts of the country determined to return to an agricultural life in proximity to other Hmong. Choosing a rural part of California, several hundred per month migrated to the Merced/Fresno area where they remain. In the few studies that have been done on secondary migration since 1980, the Hmong figure prominently as a principal source of such movement.

Precipitating some of the larger scale movement to California, among both the Hmong and other refugee groups, was a second factor--a change in federal regulations regarding eligibility for the refugee cash and medical assistance. Beginning in the spring of 1982, the period of time during which refugees benefitted from a waiver of family composition requirements for cash assistance was reduced from 36 to 18 months. For those still needing cash assistance, only one

program was still available; if refugees qualified for existing general assistance programs, they could be served in these programs and states could be reimbursed for those costs. In a number of major refugee receiving states, most notably Oregon and Washington, large numbers of refugees lost eligibility for assistance as a result of this regulatory change. According to a recent study done by the state of Washington, secondary migration was one mechanism used by refugees to cope with the situation. A minimum of 14 percent of the refugees terminated from assistance moved out of state by August 1982. Another 7 percent moved between August 1982 and April 1983. (Some of the refugees who could not be traced during the study are believed to be secondary migrants. If some portion did leave the state the estimate of secondary migration is probably closer to 25 percent.) For Washington state these levels of out-migration are significant because prior to this period, the state was one of the few that registered a net in-migration from year to year. Of those who moved, the majority went to California. The movement varied substantially by ethnic group. Whereas only 6 percent of the Sino-Vietnamese moved out of state, 37 percent of the Hmong/Mien left, all but a few going to California.

Oregon also did a study of the impact of the new regulations on its refugee population. The study determined that fully 90 percent of the Hmong living within the state prior to termination of assistance moved out-of-state between February and July 1982. 84 percent of the Hmong who migrated said they did so in order to gain better benefits and 16 percent stated that they wished to be close to

family and friends. Although these data indicate the strong pull of California's welfare system, it is clear that other factors were at work in prompting the wholesale movement of the Hmong. No other group showed as high a proportion of secondary migrants (18 percent of the Lao, 10 percent of the Vietnamese and 4 percent of the ethnic Lao moved out of state by December 1982), although these groups were also terminated from assistance.

Although the available statistical data indicate that most of the secondary migration occurring at present is in the direction of California, anecdotal evidence indicates that a more complicated pattern of migration may in fact be emerging. As noted above, most of the available data pertain to refugees who are recipients of cash assistance, or who moved following termination from cash assistance, and little is known about the migration patterns of refugees who are more self-sufficient. Also, little is known about the migration patterns of refugees who have been receiving cash assistance while enrolled in training programs and who have completed their education and are now seeking employment. In several states, most notably Texas, people working with refugees have been describing two phenomena that may shed light on these questions. First, employment service providers have indicated that increasingly they are serving refugees who have moved to their state from areas with high welfare dependency rates, most notably California. Most of these refugees have been in the United States for more than 18 months and are not eligible for cash assistance in the states to which they have moved, although they might have been eligible in the state from which they moved. Second, some secondary migrants

are moving back to the areas in which they were initially placed. Many of these refugees had moved to states with liberal cash assistance policies and are now returning to states with more restrictive programs.

The return migration pattern conforms to theories about the sequences of migration. DaVanza and Morrison found that return migration is a widespread phenomenon. About one-fourth of all moves and one-third of repeat moves recorded in their sample were identified as migration back to the starting point. Return migration was highest among those who were dissatisfied with their employment prospects in the new location. Twenty percent of those who experienced unemployment in the year following their initial move returned to their original home. The less educated are more likely to return to where they lived before, rather than move on to a third location. And, the propensity to return is related to the amount of time that has elapsed since leaving the initial place of residence. The longer a person is in a new location, the less likely he or she will be to return to a previous place of residence.

While the evidence on return migration suggests that some refugees have not yet sorted out their place of residence and may continue to move until they find an agreeable location, the anecdotal evidence that refugees are moving from states with liberal welfare policies to states with restrictive ones suggests other possibilities. At present, one can only hypothesize about their motives since no systematic research has been conducted on this issue. Some officials suggest that refugees may consider some

states to be good training grounds--places where they can learn English and some skills, even if they do not intend to stay there. When their training is completed and they feel more confident of their ability to compete in the U.S. job market, they may then move to other states, presumably those with good employment prospects. If this is the case--and its likelihood should be further examined--the refugee population inmigration rates and cash assistance dependency rates in certain states may be exaggerated at the present time and will continue to be. For example, California's welfare dependency rate may now be higher than the national average because a large number of refugees who have moved there or been initially placed there are still in the midst of their preparation cycle. If, upon completion of their studies, a large number of these refugees then leave the state to look for jobs elsewhere and new arrivals come into California and take their place, California's dependency rate will not appear to lower, even though many of the refugees who had been living there are now self-sufficient.

Summary

To summarize, refugees who have been resettled since 1979 are more highly concentrated upon placement than were those who arrived in 1975, but because of the great dispersal that took place that year, the Indochinese refugees are still more dispersed than other immigrant populations. The current geographic distribution of refugees has been influenced by the following factors:

- The residency patterns of the Indochinese refugees who had been resettled in 1975, as determined by both their initial placements and secondary migration;
- Family reunification aims that led to placement of most Indochinese refugees in areas that already had high concentrations of refugees;

- Formal placement policies that reduced the placement of free cases into high impact areas and encouraged the development of new resettlement sites, through the Khmer Guided Placement Project and the Favorable Alternative Sites Project;

- A growing diversity in the refugee populations that are now being resettled, which has contributed on the one hand to a high level of concentration (since most non-Indochinese refugees are more highly concentrated than the Indochinese) and on the other to the introduction of new refugee resettlement sites (i.e., places which received few Indochinese refugees but are receiving large numbers of other groups);

- Cash and medical assistance policy changes that led to the termination from assistance of large numbers of refugees in Washington and Oregon, a significant minority of whom moved out of state; and

- The decision on the part of the Hmong community to establish a new community in the Central Valley of California.

Conclusions

This examination of the state-of-information regarding the residency patterns and secondary migration of refugees raises several policy questions and issues. As this analysis has demonstrated, the Indochinese have been more dispersed throughout the country than any other immigrant group about which there is comparable data. Further, the analysis has shown that efforts to balance the demands of family reunification and the desire to avoid further impacts in areas with high concentrations have been largely successful. Even prior to implementation of current placement policy (in fact, with the start of the Khmer Guided Placement Program and voluntary efforts on the part of the sponsoring agencies), the resettlement of refugees in areas with large concentrations of refugees had been reduced.

Interestingly, the greater concentration of other refugee

populations has led to far less concern about placement policy than has the relatively more dispersed distribution of the Indochinese. Several reasons for this come to mind. First, refugees from most other nations have arrived in far fewer numbers. Large percentages of these groups have not necessarily translated into large refugee communities. For example, the 35 to 40 percent of the Indochinese population living in California equal about 250,000 people at this point. On the other hand, 100 percent of the Ethiopian refugees in the United States equal only about 10,000 persons. Even if all of them settle in one state, they will account for a fraction of the number of Indochinese. That overall numbers play a part is evident in the fact that the other refugee group that has evoked considerable concern with regard to placements are the Cuban refugees and more recently Cuban-Haitian entrants. Some 800,000 Cubans have entered the United States since 1960, and their concentration in Miami and a few other areas has provoked criticism about placement policy.

Overall numbers, however, are not the sole explanation. There are several other immigrant groups that have settled in particular places in roughly the same numbers over the same period of time as have the Indochinese and Cubans. For example, over 300,000 Filipinos are estimated to have entered the United States between 1975 and 1982; 46.4 percent, or close to 150,000 indicated that they intended to reside in California--a number that is identical to the number of Indochinese placed in California during the same period. (Neither figure includes secondary migration into or out of the state, and does not, therefore, indicate numbers actually resident in California.)

[Forbes, 1983]

The explanation for the particular interest in the placement patterns of the Indochinese may rest in the circumstances of their resettlement and adjustment to U.S. life. The Indochinese, unlike several of the other refugee groups, had no existing ethnic community in the United States upon their arrival in 1975. Therefore, their arrival was not cushioned by the activities of persons who had already established themselves in their U.S. communities. The Indochinese were truly newcomers and, thus, stood out all the more. Moreover, as refugees, the Indochinese were a particularly visible and vulnerable group. A range of special programs were established to aid them in their adjustments to the United States. Also, very public efforts were made to find sponsors and communities willing to assist them upon arrival. Therefore, their resettlement was accompanied by the type of publicity that attaches itself to few other groups of newcomers.

The circumstances under which they fled Southeast Asia caused considerable attention to be paid to them as well, and not all of this attention was postively disposed towards the refugees. And, finally, the often traumatic circumstances under which they arrived in specific locations (particularly when proper notice had not been given of their arrival) led to community tensions and resentment that the refugees had been placed there although in balance there seems to have been less of this than might have been expected.

If this analysis is true, it may be that the process used in arriving at placement decisions, including the consultation that

takes place between sponsoring agencies and state and local officials, may be more important than the actual outcomes of placement, in terms of the dispersal or concentration of refugees. This point is important because efforts to disperse refugees, though they have been successful in some cases, may be at odds with the preferences of the refugees themselves and may even undermine the efforts of refugees to become self-sufficient.

The relationship between refugee concentrations and self-sufficiency is an elusive factor in resettlement and one that is hard to prove. Whether adjustment is more rapidly attained within or outside of the ethnic community is a question open to debate. (See, for example, Portes and Wilson, "Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami.) It remains, however, that many immigrant groups have been highly concentrated in a few locations and have also rapidly attained economic success. More research is needed to determine if there is a cause and effect relationship at work.

The relationship between initial placement decisions and secondary migration is much easier to explain and document. Refugees generally prefer to be placed with other members of their nationality or ethnic group. Dispersal often means that this cannot happen, and some number of refugees are settled where they do not wish to be. If

this happens, significant levels of secondary migration are likely to occur. Since secondary migration occurs outside of official channels, and therefore little advance notice or preparations can be made, the arrival of refugees through this route is likely to cause greater dislocations than is true of initial placements. Secondary migration is therefore more likely to aggravate feelings that adverse impacts accompany refugee resettlement.

But even here the examination of the pattern of secondary migration indicates that both the phenomenon itself and its results are likely to be short-lived. If previous experience is a guide, we can expect, in the years to come, growing geographic stability among recent refugees to the United States. With increased employment and the establishment of social and other ties to their new communities, the degree of secondary migration exhibited by today's refugees is likely to draw closer to those of other U.S. residents. Certainly the pattern of movement--i.e., towards the South and West--they have exhibited already puts them into the American mainstream.